

VETERANS NEWS

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Veterans Affairs Secretary Issues Statement on GI Bill Expansion Signed Into Law Today

President Bush today signed the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 which greatly enhances and expands GI Bill benefits for veterans.

"One of the greatest programs ever conceived for our country's progress was the GI Bill following World War II. This program enabled millions of American Veterans to become trained and educated, many of whom went on to become the next leaders of this great nation," said Tom Johnson, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs. "This new GI Bill will give our new veterans greater options and opportunities to pursue higher education or technical training that will help them build a life here at home and a strong future for this state and country. Enactment of this great program will educate and train the next leaders of the 21st century."

Basics of the GI Bill expansion

The GI Bill expansion is one of the most significant pieces of legislation enacted by the 110th Congress.

- This expansion creates a permanent new program that seeks to match the all-expenses-paid college education offered to World War II veterans by the original GI Bill ([PL78-346](#)), which led to an enormous surge in college enrollments.
- The measure will give veterans who have served at least three years on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001, a maximum educational benefit equal to the highest tuition for a public college or university in their state, plus a monthly stipend for housing determined by geographical areas. It also establishes a new program providing a federal match for a private college's financial contributions toward a veteran's tuition.
- Veterans will have 15 years to use their educational benefits; National Guard and Reserve members will be eligible for the same assistance.
- This bill also will allow service members to transfer unused educational benefits to their spouses and dependents.

